

Chapter 8

Resilience, Reflection and Reflexive

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Historically the teacher resilience literature has tended to focus on the individual (Day, 2017), their ability to manage stressors and risk factors and to draw on protective factors (Howard and Johnson, 2004). More recently the emphasis has shifted from analysis of the individual, towards understandings which emphasise the interaction between individuals and their environments (Ungar, 2012). Focussed more on the latter rather than the former, this chapter moves away from the potentially damaging effects of a ‘pull yourself together’ mentality, in favour of analysis which contextualises teacher resilience. Teacher resilience is viewed more in terms of the space where an individual’s capacity to navigate challenges interacts over time with their personal and professional contexts (Beltman, 2015). The desired outcome of this meeting between individual and context is a teacher who experiences professional engagement and growth, commitment, enthusiasm, satisfaction, and wellbeing (Beltman, 2015) and thus is able to act in a personally, socially and emotionally responsible way. The nexus between professional challenge and teacher satisfaction is explored through two case studies presented in this chapter and the subsequent discussion which addresses the inclusion of children with additional needs (both special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) and able and talented).

Reflection and reflexive practice emerge in this chapter as two key components of resilience. Much is written about both topics and ‘many models, frameworks or

theories describe reflective and reflexive processes' (Bolton with Delderfield, 2017:52). For the purposes of this chapter, reflection is broadly defined as the action of purposefully thinking about education so as to improve professional practice (Sellars, 2017). This might involve the rational, logical analysis of a problem (Dewey, 1933) or could occur 'in action' whilst a problem is being addressed (Schön, 1983). Reflection will always be 'for action' (i.e. for a purpose) (Eraut, 1995), but need not be triggered by negative events or positioned around a problem (Boud, Keogh and Walker, 1985). Returning to the Latin derived definition, reflexivity refers to a turning back on oneself. Reflexivity concerns developing one's self-awareness of what we bring to a situation, having an awareness of the capital that can influence actions, the habits which can become unquestioningly assumed and the nature of the field in which we operate (Bourdieu with Wacquant, 1992). As such it involves 'question[ing] our own attitudes, theories-in-use, values, assumptions, prejudices and habitual actions; to understand our complex roles in relation to others' (Bolton with Delderfield, 2017:10). A teacher's reflexive awareness should therefore shape their in-action reflections; i.e. the in the moment choices teachers make concerning interactions with others (colleagues, parents, children, etc). Of central importance to this chapter is the position reflection and reflexive action play with regard to valuing diversity and promoting inclusion for those described as having additional needs. As with other chapters in this book, teachers personal, social and emotional responsibility will be highlighted throughout this chapter.

The two case studies presented in this chapter are viewed as the narrative which shapes the direction of the discussion and analysis. Involving five people, the case studies are a small-scale sample and are not intended to be representative of a

universal experience. Rather the case studies are utilised as a way to connect theory to practicing teachers' lived experiences (van Manen, 2011) of the three Rs: resilience, reflection and reflexive action. The aim of the chapter is to share with you other teachers' experiences of the three Rs so you can reflexively consider their actions in relation to your own 'professional becoming' (Dall'Alba, 2009). It is acknowledged that professional becoming is not a straightforward matter, but rather involves ambiguities, such as possible options, combined with a certain number of constraints (Dall'Alba, 2009).

CASE STUDY: 1

COUNTRY: England

AGE GROUP: 4-11

SETTING: A government funded mainstream school which is statistically described as being in a City where social mobility is low. The inclusion statement in the English National Curriculum (DfE, 2014:9) requires all teachers to 'set high expectations for every pupil. They should plan stretching work for pupils whose attainment is significantly above the expected standard, [and] they have an even greater obligation to plan lessons for pupils who have low levels of prior attainment or come from disadvantaged backgrounds'.

PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED: Four teachers (three qualified teachers and one Newly Qualified Teacher)

THE CASE STUDY

Since 2013 the school has worked to develop its vision for pupils in the setting, a key mission being pupils understand, believe in, and achieve their full potential. This is lived through the four Rs: resilience, resourcefulness, reflectiveness, and reciprocity. Of their own volition staff take personal responsibility to further emphasise the four Rs in their own classrooms through the use of class mottos, such as: “I’m always proud of you if you try”, “the more you put in the more you get out”, “see if you can try just a little bit harder”, etc. When defining resilience, staff refer to perseverance and motivation, this applies to both themselves and the pupils. Engagement with challenge is unanimously described by participants as the mechanism for achieving higher levels of resilience.

When referring to their own personal challenges, the group spoke not of anxiety, isolation or fear, but of working with others (reciprocity) to maintain their own interest levels and as a way to gain support.

The group’s description of their social responsibility to work in a collegiate way can be analysed as three pronged: whole school/team, individual and informal.

Whole school/team

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) which leads to practice change; for example, at the whole school level CPD has addressed teaching to age related expectations and the implementation of a new maths scheme which supports deep understanding. Engagement with research is also a prominent part of the whole school culture. Staffs’ personal responsibility to engage with research takes on many forms; for example, reading and discussing research in a weekly focussed research meeting,

drawing on published research as the basis for teaching, conducting small-scale research, disseminating their own research findings and publishing research.

Individualised coaching and mentoring are a key part of the school's enhancement strategy. With many staff in the school trained to coach colleagues, mechanisms are in place to empower staff to work collaboratively with one another to solve challenges. For example, one coach spoke about discussing with a coachee-teacher, ways to remove barriers for a child with speech and communication needs. The process of coaching helped the teacher reflect upon the current situation and recall a previous time when the coachee removed barriers for a pupil with complex needs on the SEN register. Drawing on this previous experience the coachee decided she needed to work further on her relationship with the child, gaining a deeper understanding of the pupil's likes and dislikes. This information was subsequently utilised as the basis for personalising work, whilst also meeting the school's requirement to teach to age related expectations.

Informal conversations between staff; for example, staff spoke of a culture of open, honest communication that regularly involved sharing successes related to pupil's learning and reflecting with a colleague when pupils seem more challenged by a specific concept.

On the theme of challenge, the group described a need to balance the new with the familiar. Too much challenge can become overwhelming, potentially depleting a person's resilience rather than building it. Crucially staff spoke of the importance of working in an appreciation culture. This culture is embedded through varied means,

such as formalised mechanisms (i.e. observation), to less formalised encounters when staff take time to genuinely thank people for their individualised efforts or celebrate successes together.

Continuing with the theme of collaboration, the group spoke about their emotional and social responsibility to respect others' ways of working, and of their personal responsibility to look after themselves as professionals (i.e. understanding what depletes their resilience and conversely what restores it). Referring to their emotional and social responsibility to others, staff described the importance of knowing others'/their own stressors; organisation and work ethic emerged as two key discussion topics. The effect of these forms of personal, social and emotional awareness is a general raising of professional teachers' standards and a reduction in stress levels; for example, getting work completed the evening before so colleagues with childcare commitments do not have too much to organise first thing in the morning. Reflexively focussing on their own in-the-moment decisions and actions, staff considered whether the intended impact of their actions, was in fact the impact felt by others. Referring to their personal responsibility to look after their own wellbeing, staff spoke of knowing how to ensure they each have time away from the job (i.e. some spoke of working a longer day, but not taking work home, others described having a specific allocated time at the weekend when they prepared for the following week, etc.).

OUTCOMES

The school has developed its own inclusive culture which means all pupils and staff alike feel able to thrive and achieve. When problems arise, staff feel able to raise these and work collaboratively to solve issues. Over the past five years the

school's inspectorate judgement (made by Ofsted) has improved from 'inadequate' to 'good'.

Reflective and Reflexive Questions

Focussing specifically on the inclusion of children described as having additional needs, consider the following reflective and reflexive questions.

Question 1

Referring to building and enhancing their resilience, the teachers involved described: challenge, working in a collegiate way, engagement with research, and honest open discussions as key factors. *Reflecting on your own personal experience, what would you describe as building your professional resilience?*

Question 2

The teachers' described the multiple ways they reflect on their professional day; for example, through whole school CPD, coaching, engagement with research, and informal conversations with colleagues. *What strategies do you have for reflecting on the working day and how does this reflection impact on the next day/future?*

Question 3

The teachers reflexively considered the intended impact of their own professional actions, versus, the actual impact felt by others. Over time this reflexivity has led to an increased understanding of their social and emotional responsibilities to others, their personal responsibility to themselves and their personal and emotional drivers. As such, staff have become more aware of their own professional habits and the motives which drive their actions. Staff describe the importance of learning good

habits from one another and also their social responsibility to accommodate other colleagues' needs. This high level personal, social and emotional awareness facilitates a school environment where:

- staff work together to ensure pupils are included and making progress;
- staff feel able to articulate their professional needs, learn good habits from others and make adjustments to their practice which support others' personal resilience.

Focusing on your own professional actions in the moment, can you reflexively analyse:

- What personal and emotional drivers impact your decision making, i.e. what are the motivators powering your actions?
- What actions have you taken which you subsequently adjusted, or would like to adjust? How have/could these adjustments impact your ability to be resilient?
- Whether the intended impact of your actions is the same as the impact felt by others?

CASE STUDY: 2

COUNTRY: Hong Kong

AGE GROUP: 3-18

SETTING

A private international school. Private international schools adopt a more Western culture of education, focusing on pupil wellbeing alongside academic excellence. Private schooling is expensive but an important option for families whose children do not speak Cantonese or Mandarin.

PARTICIPANT INVOLVED

The Deputy Head of the international primary school (Jay¹).

THE CASE STUDY

Jay describes the school as following a holistic approach to education. The school's philosophy is around the development of the whole child, providing the opportunity for individuals to pursue their strengths and interests alongside developing their curiosity, independence, confidence and resilience. Ensuring that pupils have life skills forms part of the curriculum entitlement and this requires a deep understanding of each pupil. When developing resilience in pupils, the school's starting point is always to understand the whole person, knowing their strengths, interests and what motivates them. Teachers then plan opportunities for pupils to experience 'failure' or 'losing' in a structured and supportive environment so they can apply the strategies taught. Initially, when identifying a group of pupils with lower levels of resilience, the most able were found to be those in greatest need of support. However, further analysis revealed a sub-group within the main group who are classed as twice exceptional. These pupils are described as highly intelligent but who may struggle in school due to a disability or learning difference; i.e. dyslexia, autism or trauma. As a result, the disability may conceal their gifts and pupils may find school difficult and become frustrated. Discussion with this group revealed they have an extreme fear of failure, which results in giving up easily or not wanting to try. This experience further motivated staff in the school to ensure they taught resilience as part of the curriculum.

When referring to her own resilience, Jay describes working in a school culture which understands change is inevitable and thus is open to it and better

¹ Jay is not the teacher's real name but is rather a pseudonym used to maintain her anonymity.

prepared. Alongside this acceptance, staff find holding themselves and others to high professional standards ensures clear expectations for the results they desire. There is an acceptance that events will occur which deplete resilience, but that the reflective process which takes place afterwards is essential for restoring resilience for next time. This cycle of challenge, reflection and resilience is described as preparing staff in the setting for future challenges. Jay also identified reflection as a process that can happen in different timescales; for example, reflecting in the moment when your questioning has not engaged all pupils, or deeper reflections occurring after sessions which focus on alternative strategies to engage pupils. Similarly, this applies to professional dialogues such as, a lull in a staff meeting, or reflecting later about a conversation with a member of staff. She also highlighted the importance of gaining feedback or liaising with other members of staff to support this reflective process.

Jay acknowledged when making challenging decisions awareness of her emotional drivers and that of other staff was important. She quoted Patrick Lencioni's work on the *Five Dysfunctions of a Team* as a personal driver to support making difficult decisions. These are: absence of trust, fear of conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability, and inattention results.

When considering professional development, Jay identified two examples where her practice moved on the quickest. The first was the demand of needing to be an 'expert' in an area within a short timescale which motivated her to take time to research and distil key points in a meaningful and relevant way to other staff. The other was through the use of 360-Feedback surveys. Through this honest professional

feedback, Jay was given a 'safe place' to explore her areas for development and have coaching discussions to identify strategies to tackle them with a trusted professional.

Jay describes challenge as the main driver for developing her resilience. She views it as a driver for reflection in the moment and after the event. To make the right decision however, is a combination of knowing yourself and others and working in a culture of openness-to-feedback and collaboration with others.

OUTCOMES

- Analysis of data for pupils with additional needs resulted in the group being further supported to develop their resilience.
 - Challenge led to rapid practice development for Jay.
 - Consultation with others provided Jay with a 'safe place' to explore her areas for development. Coaching provided the means to work on development areas.
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Reflective and Reflexive Questions

Focusing specifically on the inclusion of pupils described as having additional needs, consider the following reflective and reflexive questions.

Question 4

In question 1 you identified actions which built your resilience, can you now think about what maintains and restores your resilience, and conversely what depletes your resilience?

Question 6

Jay refers to a deep understanding of the whole child born of analysis as the main factor influencing her decision making in the classroom. She also describes analysis with colleagues as shaping her understanding. Her understanding of the pupil is situated therefore in research and collaboration.

Regarding supporting/extending pupil's learning and resilience, what factors influence your decision making in the classroom?

Interpreting the Case Studies

There are many points presented in the case studies above which could be drawn out and interpreted as to their meaning (Gadamer, 1986/1998:66-68); however, for the purposes of this chapter the following themes will be explored: change, challenge and uncertainty, and whole school values and collaboration. To support your engagement with the chapter key questions relevant to your own professional becoming (Dall'Alba, 2009) are presented throughout the discussion.

Personal and Emotional Responsibility: change, challenge and uncertainty

All five participants featured in the case studies perceived there to be a correlation between resilience and an ability to handle change and challenge. We have been careful not to refer specifically to the individual's ability to be resilient or handle change and challenge, for it is argued that resilience occurs in a context (Beltman, 2015), dependent on both the characteristics of the situation as well as the characteristics of a teacher (Kennedy, 2010). Reflexively analysing the need for teachers to manage change brings into view the field of teaching (Bourdieu with Wacquant, 1992) which is imbued with uncertainty (Helsing, 2007). For example, there is no one correct pedagogy or 'the' approved theory for educating the able and

talented; inclusion has no one agreed definition and is even argued to be inconsistently implemented at the level of a single country's governmental policy (Hodkinson, 2016). Such uncertainties point to a profession which operates in an interpretivistic rather than positivistic paradigm. This is perhaps not surprising as teaching is a job which predominantly relies on the forming of human relationships. Arguably those teachers who 'remain in the profession with motivation and commitment have learned to handle this kind of uncertainty in a positive manner' (Kroll, 2012:19). Even the nature of this uncertainty is contested; for example, is it a liability or an asset (Helsing, 2007).

Your professional becoming

What uncertainties have you encountered in education? How do you perceive and manage these uncertainties?

The teachers featured in case study 1 and 2 are arguably those Kroll (2012) describes as having learned to handle this kind of uncertainty in a positive manner. Rather than referring to their classroom practice as fixed and defined, they each described to their personal responsibility to know the pupils in their classes and respond to them as individuals. Those in case study 1 articulated this through the lens and language of a growth mindset (Dweck, 2015), i.e. referring to the effort pupils make rather than a perception of pupil's innate talent or permanently fixed ability. Whereas Jay (case study 2) described her commitment to all pupils' holistic development and the importance of building pupils' resilience (Claxton, 2018). The participants' analysis of each pupil as an individual with their own strengths, talents and ability is particularly significant to the context of this book for it maps onto Booth and Ainscow's (2011) inclusive pedagogy for *all*. Emphasising the importance of participation, Booth and Ainscow's (2011) construction of inclusion

refers to: learning, playing or working in collaboration with others; making choices about, and having a say in, what happens; and being recognised and accepted for oneself. Of particular note is the wide-reaching nature of this statement, for it includes all those in the school community: children and adults. This construction of inclusion will be referred to in more detail in the conclusion to this chapter.

Your professional becoming

What other constructions of inclusion have you encountered? How does Booth and Ainscow's (2011) construction of inclusion compare to others you are aware of?

Analysis of the case study participants' inclusive beliefs (Booth and Ainscow, 2011) about pupil ability/disability, suggests their construction of learners is more interventionist in nature, rather than pathognomonic (Jordan, et al., 2009). Teachers who have a strong interventionist perspective generally think about pupils in terms of how they learn best, whereas those holding a pathognomonic perspective are more likely to focus on the pathological characteristics of the learner, i.e: a within pupil construction ability/disability as a fixed entity. The interventionist focus on 'context for learning' aligns closely with a social model view of disability, where the aim is to remove environmental barriers, rather than adjust and remediate the 'disabled person' (Oliver, 2004). Conversely pathognomonic perspectives correlate more closely with a biological, medical model perspective of disability and thus tend to adopt the language of symptoms, disorders and treatment. Reflexive analysis (Bourdieu with Wacquant, 1992) of the medical model points to a need for: specialist assessments, a special pedagogy,

specialist knowledge and or/qualifications, specialist intervention, etc.). Reviewing the teaching practice of those in Jordan et al's. (2009) study with a pathognomonic perspective also reveals a correlation between their beliefs and medical model practice. For example, they were more likely to believe in segregated forms of pupil intervention, not recognising their personal responsibility to educate all learners in their class, and to feel they themselves were not sufficiently qualified to teach pupils with a label of SEND. It was also shown these teachers had less effective practice overall (e.g. time management and classroom management). Interestingly, in a separate paper (also from Canada) Gray et al. (2017) align depleted teacher resilience with the growing trend toward inclusive education. Appearing to take a different stance on inclusion to Booth and Ainscow (2017), Gray et al.'s (2017) analysis suggests a more pathognomonic perspective which emphasises specialised SEND knowledge and points to studies which argue teaching pupils with SEN creates less time for the rest of the class.

Your professional becoming

Reflecting on your own teaching practice, would you describe yourself as more aligned with the interventionist or pathognomonic perspective? How does this effect your interactions/the support you provide for pupils with additional needs?

Analysis of the literature pertaining to an inclusive pedagogy for pupils described as able and talented, unsurprisingly also tends to reject segregation of able pupils from their peers (Hymer and Michel, 2002; Moltzen, 2011, 2006). For some the argument leads to a focus on in-class enrichment over early participation in a

curriculum pupils will have access to in the fullness of time (Hymer and Michel, 2002), whereas for others like Moltzen (2011) the picture is less clear. An ongoing issue highlighted in the literature is the challenge of defining what is meant by able and talented and to whom it pertains (Sternberg, 2019). The heterogeneous nature of the able and talented group points to the complexity of this label and the tension in the literature. A heterogeneous construction of able and talented mirrors the viewpoints of participants in this study who spoke of recognising the many different ways pupils could be viewed as able (from ability in a subject, to skills-based abilities like being a resilient learner). Once again, the teachers spoke of a fluid rather than fixed perception of pupil ability, describing no one pupil as able in every aspect of learning (Moltzen, 2006) and some pupils as twice exceptional (i.e. both able and with a special educational need). The challenge for teachers in removing barriers and engaging the latter, is that twice exceptional learners can become invisible to teachers, as ability in one area can mask disability in another (Silverman, 2019).

Your professional becoming

Do you perceive pupil's ability to be fluid or fixed? How is your belief about pupil's ability exemplified in your teaching practice?

Perceiving pupil's ability as fixed (akin with constructs of IQ) and holding pathognomonic beliefs about SEN might lead to some of the following school behaviours and cultures:

- teachers expressing a view that certain pupils with SEND are not suited to their class or should not be part of their school, perhaps being more suited to a special segregated education where they will receive 'expert treatment';
- pupils with SEND spending significant amounts of time away from their peer group in intervention groups or perhaps even in isolation rooms;
- pressure from parent groups for certain pupils with SEND (particularly affecting behaviour) to be excluded from a school;
- teaching assistants spending greater proportions of time with pupils with a label of SEND than qualified teachers;
- increased applications for additional funding for pupils who have SEN;
- teachers undervaluing and failing to recognise ability in pupils whose aptitudes lie outside the boundaries of a curriculum subject;
- teachers failing to recognise ways to remove barriers and enable twice exceptional students.

It is important to recognise the school behaviours described above can happen for a number of different reasons. Thus, careful reflexive analysis (Bourdieu with Wacquant, 1992) of a school's behaviour is required before conclusions can be drawn regarding the nature of a school's actions.

Reflexive question

The behaviours described above are rarely the result of one person's actions, rather more commonly result from a complex range of factors. Can you reflexively analyse the possible factors leading to such behaviours? How might these factors be addressed within a school? Your answer is likely to require an

interweaving of possibility with constraint (Dall’Alba, 2009), possibility of what could happen, woven together with the structural constraint of what can happen.

Social Responsibility: whole school values and collaboration

There has been much debate in the literature about the nature of resilience and whether or not an individual’s personal survival characteristics and their ability to be super-human have been overly focussed upon (Day and Gu, 2014; Margolis and Alexandrou, 2014;). Whilst this debate remains unresolved, there is consensus in the literature that context counts (Day and Gu, 2014; Margolis and Alexandrou, 2014); this analysis echoes narratives presented in both case studies featured in this chapter. Case studies 1 and 2 include descriptions concerning the process for building and maintaining resilience. Crucially in both instances this involves space for reflection, time for collaboration and perhaps counter intuitively, challenge.

Starting with challenge, whilst too much challenge holds the potential to damage resilience, being supported to accomplish new things, perhaps even actions perceived as difficult, is described in both case studies as the mechanism for building resilience. Mapping this onto teaching and learning, there is a parallel here between the case study descriptions of building resilience and Vygotsky’s theory (1962) on the zone of proximal development (ZPD); i.e. with good support and scaffolding the teachers featured in case study 1 and 2 have been able to meet the challenging personal, social and emotional responsibilities associated with being a school teacher. Returning to the concept of uncertainty in education (Helsing, 2007), it is perhaps not surprising to find the case study participants

describing ongoing learning as an essential component to maintaining their personal resilience.

Reflective question

Can you think of a time when you have been supported to achieve a challenge?

How did this experience build your resilience?

It is interesting to note that reflection is clearly present in all participants' analyses of resilience; in both case studies coaching is identified as a tool for reflection. Coaching can take on a number of formats from informal to specialist, self-coaching to team coaching and collaborative peer-coaching (Wharton, et al. 2019). In case study 1 setting, teachers and teaching assistants all have the opportunity to train as a coach, thus anyone in the school can approach a trained member of staff to gain personal support with a challenge they are analysing. The coacher avoids providing the answers for the coachee, rather engages them in a series of questions that facilitate reflection and reflexive action resulting in finding new ways to approach a situation. As described in case study 1, reflection of this nature can support inclusion and the valuing of diversity (Bolton with Delderfield, 2017), for it provides opportunity to enhance provision and meet the specific needs of individual pupils.

Your professional development

Can you think of a time when your professional resilience has been supported by working with others in a reflective way? What form did this reflection have (i.e. group collaboration in CPD, engagement with research, informal conversation,

etc.). Can you think of a time when reflection has enabled you to value diversity and act inclusively?

For participants in both case studies, continued engagement with research is an essential part of their working lives. Staff in case study 1 described their continued engagement with research as a 'professional right', thus making research a part of their teacherly identity, whereas Jay described drawing on research as an important mechanism for moving her practice on quickly. This engagement is of fundamental importance, for it provides the basis for reflexive work, which enables the exploration of values, assumptions, prejudices and habitual actions (Bolton with Delderfield, 2017:10). Reflexive work of this nature is also argued to provide a means to abate the discourse of 'expertism', where expertism constructs special education through the lens of pathologies requiring prescription outside the skill base of the mainstream teacher (Robinson, 2017). The significance of reflexive thinking is also highlighted in Kroll's (2012) analysis of Lambe and Bones (2007) work with trainee teachers in Northern Ireland. For despite a trainee's successful experience working in a non-selective school which includes pupils with SEND and the trainees' change in attitudes towards ability grouping, they still held an intractable belief that they personally would not have done so well in a non-selective setting. Similarly, Charles (2019) work into the employment of teachers with dyslexia in England reveals that whilst schools might operate an inclusive policy for the pupils in their setting, removing barriers for teaching staff with dyslexia is perceived as unreasonable. There are no easy solutions to the scenarios highlighted by Kroll (2012) and Charles (2019), however, they do point

to a school's social responsibility to 'find a variety of methods for holding these beliefs up to inquiry and scrutiny' (Kroll, 2012:80).

Your professional becoming

Can you think of a time when engagement with research has provided the basis for your own reflexive analysis? Can you think of opportunities for you to disseminate your engagement with research?

Window on Research

The window on research detailed below provides another example of teachers' engagement with research to benefit pupils with additional needs.

Norwich, B., and Ylonen, A. (2014) 'Lesson study practices in the development of secondary teaching of students with moderate learning difficulties: a systematic qualitative analysis in relation to context and outcomes', *British Educational Research Journal*, 41(4):629-649

Lesson Study is an internationally known model of teacher-led practitioner research which aims to support professional development and facilitate reflective practice. Popular in Japan, the approach engages a small group of teachers in co-planning a cycle of research lessons (often three) involving review and development. Once co-planning is complete, one teacher from the group leads the lesson whilst the others observe. Feedback from the lesson studied focuses on student learning rather than teacher practice. Drawing on the observers' comments, together the team then develop and enhance the next lesson to be studied.

Whilst lesson study has generally focussed on mathematics and science education, Norwich and Ylonen (2014) advance the research field by addressing the inclusion of pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD). In the paper referred to above, Norwich and Ylonen (2014) complete work with sixty-one school teachers from twenty-nine schools on lesson study. Norwich and Ylonen's (2014) research focussed specifically on two main aims:

1. the variations of lesson study practice used by teachers; and
2. the extent to which teachers' context related to the efficacy of lesson study.

Norwich and Ylonen (2014) found teams adapted lesson study to suit their particular subject area, and the needs of pupils identified with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) in their teaching contexts. Norwich and Ylonen (2014) argue these findings indicate the flexibility of lesson study; they do point out that whilst the teachers involved had been encouraged to use research informed knowledge relevant to teaching pupils with MLD, this happened between 40% and 50% of the time. Teachers who did not refer to research informed knowledge drew on their personal/craft knowledge and/or some more general research knowledge as the basis for shaping their decisions; the teachers interviewed for the research found this approach adequate. Teachers engaged in the study worked on aims that were both curriculum focused and more general (e.g. development of pupil independence, enhancement of pupil engagement, etc.). Analysis of the data shows how variations in the degree to which schools were supportive of lesson study (timing, release and management support), correlates positively with pupil learning gains and teacher outcomes, as well as a school's continued use of lesson study. Norwich and Ylonen (2014) argue these findings provide support for the model of lesson study depicted in their paper. **If you**

are interested in lesson study how would you construct a proposal to introduce it in your setting?

Conclusion Teaching as a profession is argued to contain numerous uncertainties (Helsing, 2007) and as pointed to in this chapter, the fields of special education, able and talented and inclusion are no exception. Reflective and reflexive practices such as, engagement with coaching, research and surveys can be viewed as tools of the interventionist paradigm (Jordan et al., 2009); tools which enable staff to meet the needs of the individual pupil and develop the whole child. Perhaps surprisingly, challenge emerges as the key component for building staff resilience; for example, a staff member describes a scenario where learning to meet the needs of a specific pupil with a label of SEN built their resilience. Challenge of this nature is however unlikely to be an efficacious resilience building tool if staff feel isolated and unable to gain the support they need. All case study participants described emersion in a rich professional environment comprising of varied, personalised and relevant CPD, as an effective means of building, maintaining and restoring their personal resilience. The significance of high quality personalised CPD can be viewed as illustrative of the nexus identified in the literature (Beltman, 2015; Day and Gu, 2014; Margolis and Alexandrou, 2014; Ungar, 2012) between teacher resilience and school context. The rich variety of CPD opportunities provides a suitable environment for staff to enhance their skills as an inclusive practitioner in such a way that restores, maintains and builds their resilience. In relation to participants' personal and emotional responsibility to maintain and restore their own resilience, and, their social responsibility to consider others' resilience, context also counts. For example, case study participants refer to the culture in their settings (i.e. an appreciation culture, or a culture where open and honest feedback at

every level is welcomed). You have seen how important it is from the case studies presented in this chapter for a teacher to value each and every member of the community including themselves. Such valuing requires an understanding of, and provision for, the environment which supports every member's success. The conclusions drawn here point to a symbiosis between the inclusive environment created for children and young people, and, the inclusive supportive environment created for and by staff. This symbiosis echoes Booth and Ainscow's (2011) expansive construction of inclusion, involving both children and adults.

Implications for Educators

When reading the implications below note how each of them locates you the teacher in a context. Consider the response required from both you and the educational setting in which you work to achieve the following.

1. Challenge need not be viewed as a mechanism for depleting staff resilience, but when contextualised in a rich school culture of reflection and reflexive practice can be constructed as a driver for increased resilience.
2. Educational settings should reflexively analyse their own behaviours questioning whether attitudes, theories in use, assumptions or habitual actions point to an interventionist paradigm.
3. Educational settings should provide a range of relevant opportunities for staff to embed, reflect upon and reflexively analyse their interventionist approaches to teaching and learning.
4. Through consultation with relevant parties, schools should consider developing an inclusive (Booth and Ainscow, 2011) wellbeing plan (Hilton, 2018) which actively aims to support and enhance pupil and staff resilience alike. Staff might

consider targeting their own wellbeing through direct engagement with the wellbeing plan, reflexively analysing whether the tools available to them are efficacious or in need of adjustment.

Finally, focusing on you as an individual in a context, can you list three actions you will try to take to promote the inclusion of pupils with additional needs?

Annotated Bibliography

Kroll, L. (2012) *Self Study and Inquiry into Practice: Learning to teach for equality and social justice in the elementary school classroom*, Abingdon: Routledge

Addressing teacher inquiry and reflective practice in a social justice context this book provides a highly relevant follow up to this chapter.

Norwich, B. & Jones, J. (2014) *Lesson Study: Making a difference to teaching pupils with learning difficulties*, London: Bloomsbury

This book provides further information about implementing lesson study for the benefit of the child with SEND.

Robinson, D., & Goodey, C. (2017) 'Agency in the darkness: 'fear of the unknown', learning disability and teacher education for inclusion', *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 22(4): 426-440

This article provides a thought-provoking analysis of inclusion phobia which is analysed through the lens of preservice teachers' reflections on practicum.

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